

ATTACHMENT 4: SUMMARY OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROVISIONS FOR THE RURAL POLICY AREA, INCLUDING PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

The Rural Policy Area is divided into two tiers, the northern tier and southern tier, with different base residential densities in response to the dominant rural land use and development patterns of these distinct geographic areas. The Rural Policy Area is planned for rural economy uses and limited residential development. Among residential uses, clustered developments are the preferred development pattern in the Rural Policy Area. Clustered developments allow landowners to group residential lots in a traditional community pattern so that a substantial amount of the remaining land is available for rural economy uses, traditional agriculture and/or open space.

Southern Tier of Rural Policy Area: The southern tier (defined generally as south of Goose Creek and North Fork of Goose Creek to the County border with Clarke, Fauquier and Prince William Counties, Virginia) is characterized by an existing large lot pattern and is the center of Loudoun's equine industry. The comprehensive plan (as it is proposed to be amended) calls for this area to develop at a base density of 40 acres per lot, with the development option to cluster residential lots at the equivalent of one dwelling unit per 20 acres.¹ In addition, the zoning for this area should provide a spin-off lot option at the same overall density as provided in the cluster option. (Spin-off lots may be created individually at minimum size of 80,000 square feet. Such lots may be clustered and are counted against density permitted by the originating tract.)

Northern Tier of Rural Policy Area: The northern tier (defined generally as north of Goose Creek and North Fork of Goose Creek to the County border with Montgomery, Frederick and Washington Counties, Maryland; Jefferson County, West Virginia; and Clarke County Virginia) is characterized by a mix of smaller lots interspersed with larger parcels still in agricultural use. The comprehensive plan (as it is proposed to be amended) calls for this area to develop at a base density of 20 acres per lot, with the development option to cluster residential lots at the equivalent of one dwelling unit per 10 acres.² In addition, the zoning for this area should provide a spin-off lot option at the same overall density as provided in the cluster option. (Spin-off lots may be created individually at minimum size of 80,000 square feet. Such lots may be clustered and are counted against density permitted by the originating tract.)

Rural residential rezonings to higher densities may be appropriate and allowed in the northern and southern tiers of the Rural Policy Area at densities compatible with the existing development pattern for that area. All Rural Residential rezonings are to be developed in a clustered pattern and meet established performance criteria, including traffic capacity limits and design standards. Rural Residential rezonings to higher densities will be contingent on the mitigation of capital facility and transportation impacts; protection of significant open space and opportunities for rural economic uses; compatibility with surrounding uses and the rural landscape; protection of significant site features and environmental resources; and other matters related to the health, safety and welfare of the community.

¹ The current plan for the Southern Tier recommends a base density of one lot per fifty acres, with a cluster option at one unit per 20 acres.

² The current plan for the Northern Tier recommends a base density of one lot per twenty acres, with a cluster option at one unit per 10 acres.

